

Compilation of Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib

The compositions of the Sikh Gurus were preserved and passed onto their successors by Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Angad Dev Ji. Guru Arjan Dev Ji subsequently collected hymns of the first three Gurus and some Bhagats from Bhai Mohan, the son of Guru Amar Das, and added the compositions of Guru Ramdas, and his Own. He got the Aad Granth (also called Pothi, Bir) written by Bhai Gurdas. Guru Arjan Dev Ji gave the copy to Bhai Bano for binding. He took it for binding to Lahore and on the way prepared a copy. This is known as Bhai Bano's Bir. Guru Arjan Dev Ji got the original after binding. Guru Arjan Dev Ji who compiled the Holy Scripture, installed Granth with all reverence and devotion at Harmandir Sahib, Amritsar in 1604. Baba Buddha was appointed as its first Granthi or keeper. This copy passed into custody of Bhai Dhirmal, son of Guru Hargobind and currently been preserved at Kartarpur by his successors. Guru Gobind Singh Ji added Guru Teg Bhadhar Ji's bani upon His succession.

Gurbani and Bhagatbani

The major principle of compilation was that verses which praised God and Guru, advocated naam simran, and denounced superstition and caste were to be included in the Holy Book. As regards the compositions of Bhagats, generally the same principle was observed. Guru Arjan included the verses of those who believed in the unity of God and brotherhood of man.

The Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib was to be broad based. It could contain with itself principles of monotheism and the Bhakti cult. No puristic or linguistic tests were applied to the compositions. Foreign words, coined words and current words were put into this literary dish. In selecting the musical scores or Ragas, the Guru employed homely and simple metaphors. Generally speaking, hymns of devotion, the glory of God, men's spiritual efforts, importance of

Naam and equality of men and women were incorporated in the Holy Book.

Sri Aad Guru Granth contains compositions of the first five Gurus, the ninth Guru, nineteen Bhagats (Beni, Bhikhan, Dhanna, Farid, Jai Dev, Kabir, Mardana, Nam Dev, Parmanand, Pipa, Ramanand, Ravidas, Sadna, Sain, Sundar, Surdas, Satta Balwand and Trilochand) and Bhattas.

The current format of Sri Aad Guru Granth has 1430 Pages. The Bani is written in 31 Raags. Sri Aad Guru Granth contains 5867 hymns (excluding Raagmala). 947 hymns are written by the first Guru, 63 by the second Guru, 869 by the third, 636 by the fourth, 2312 by the fifth, 115 by the ninth and 1 by the Tenth Guru. Among the remaining hymns of Bhagats, the highest number of hymns (534) is by Kabir. (ref. Mahan Kosh by Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha)

Music forms the basis of the classification of the hymns. Under each Rag, the hymns are arranged in the following order:

Chaupadas-hymns of four verses.

Ashtapadas-hymns of eight verses Long poems.

Chhants-Verses of six lines. Short poems.

Vars consisting of two or more Saloks and a Pauri.

Poems of Bhagats in the same order.

Hymns are further classified according to the musical clef (Ghar) in which each is to be sung. So the Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib is arranged firstly according to the Raga, secondly, according to the nature or metre of the poem, thirdly authorship, and fourthly the clef.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji has summed up the nature of Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib Ji in Mundavani;

ਥਾਲ ਵਿਚਿ ਤਿੰਨਿ ਵਸਤੂ ਪਈਓ ਸਤੁ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ॥
ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਨਾਮੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਾ ਪਇਓ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਸਭਸੁ ਅਧਾਰੇ ॥
ਜੇ ਕੌ ਖਾਵੈ ਜੇ ਕੋ ਭੁੰਚੈ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਹੋਇ ਉਪਰੋ ॥
ਏਹ ਵਸਤੂ ਤਜੀ ਨਹ ਜਾਈ ਨਿਤ ਨਿਤ ਰਖੁ ਉਰਿ ਧਾਰੇ ॥
ਤਮ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਚਰਨ ਲਗਿ ਤਰੀਐ ਸਭੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਪਸਾਰੇ ॥੧॥

"In this dish are placed three things :

Truth, Contentment and Wisdom.

These are seasoned with the Name of God

which is the basis of all;

whoever eats and enjoys it, shall be saved.

It is a thing which you cannot afford to neglect.

You must take it to your hearts."

Guru Arjan Dev Ji's was to provide a book of universal religion, for everybody, everywhere. He wanted to guide and regenerate all types of men. The Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib is both metaphysics and ethics, the science of reality and the art of union with Reality. It gives us a vision of truth, and it opens up new paths for the mind of man. It is a work of divine inspiration, primarily spiritual and incidentally philosophical. It is a collection of devotional poems and prayers. The Gurus accept certain fundamental laws like Karma, cycle of birth and death, Maya etc. Such hymns enshrine the essence of four centuries (thirteenth to sixteenth) of Asian simple but telling words.

Moreover the verses are set to appropriate musical scores.

The race of man is saved !

God's word goes to the people, blessing them

And bestowing immortality on them.

My house is full of the light

Of the song of life to-day!

This is the staff on which

The old and the miserable,

*the strayed and rich shall lean
In their distress, and obtain solace,
People of God ! come, assemble,
live in this light
Dissolve this song into your soul.
Rejoice and partake of this immortal feast.*

Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib is regarded as the teachings the Gurus and is afforded with respect and reverence. It is kept on a raised platform (manji) under a canopy, covered in clean clothes. The service of the Guru is following his instructions and yoking the mind to the Name. Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib is a treasure of divine knowledge and mysticism. Guru Nanak Sahib says,

My mind is a temple of love.
My body is a robe divine.
The sacred nectar flows in the temple.
The Word is my breath
and the Song is My blood."

It is therefore in the fitness of things that both Sikhs and non-Sikhs show great respect to Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib.

GuruBani as Literature

The Punjabi language is said to have emerged from Apbhransh about 1000 A.D. In the twelfth century, Baba Farid wrote his saloks in Lehndi dialect. During the next three centuries, India was attacked by Muslim adventurers and, therefore, heroic verses known as known as Vars became popular. During this period, the Yogis developed a dialect of their own which was called the saint-language and contained terms of systems of Indian philosophy. There was very little literature worth the name before the Sikh Gurus. Moreover, Punjabi was regarded as a language of the vulgar by the aristocratic and Brahamic sections

of Hindu society. The Yogis also wrote in the Sanskrit. Some Sanskrit saloks are included in Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib.

The Sikh Gurus preached their principles in the language of the masses. They adopted popular forms of poetry such as Salok Chhant, Bara Mahan, Thhittin, Bawan Akhari, Var (heroic ballad). The Var is also a song of praise. The Gurus praised the Name and at the same time denounced egoistic pursuits.

The Sikh Gurus enriched Punjabi literature. The crude and poor language became in their hands a treasury of thoughts. They absorbed the diction of saint-language and current philosophies. In Sri Aad Guru Granth Sahib are found words associated with the Vedas, Vedanta, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shakatism, Buddhism, Jainism and Islam. Punjabi was also enriched by words of saint-language which owed its origin to Sanskrit. Persian and Arabic words came through Islam.

The Japji, Asa-di-Var of Guru Nanak Sahib, the Anand of Guru Amardas Sahib, the Sukhmani of Guru Arjan Dev Ji rightly esteemed as classics of Punjabi literature. Formalism and ritualism have been condemned. Great spiritual truths have been illustrated through simple and homely similes. The devotional hymns are full of sincerity and emotion. The compositions are pithy and pregnant with meaning. He has not only touched spiritual problems but also social and human relationships.

Raags in Gurbani

Raags have a direct relationship to human moods and the following are the connections between Raags and feeling: Following is the list of all Raags in the Gurbani

Soohi - joy and separation

Bilaaval - happiness

Gaund - strangeness, surprise, beauty
Sri - satisfaction and balance
Maajh - loss, beautification
Gauri - seriousness
Aasa - making effort
Gujri - satisfaction, softness of heart, sadness
Devgandhari - no specific feeling but the Raag has a softness
Bihaagra - beautification
Sorath - motivation
Dhanasari - inspiration, motivation
Jaitsree - softness, satisfaction, sadness
Todi - this being a flexible Raag it is apt for communicating many feelings
Bhairaagi - sadness, (Gurus have, however, used it for the message of Bhakti)
Tilang - feeling of beautification and yearning.
Raamkali - calmness
Nat Narayan - happiness
Maali Gaura - happiness
Maaru - giving up of cowardice
Tukhari - beautification
Kedara - love and beautification
Bhairav - seriousness, brings stability of mind
Basant - happiness
Sarang - sadness
Malaar - separation
Jaijawanti - viraag
Kalyaan - Bhakti Ras
Vadhans - vairaag, loss (Alahniya is sung in this Raag when someone passes away)
Parbhati - Bhakti and seriousness
Kaanra - Bhakti and seriousness

Recitation of Gurbani

All Gurus put a great emphasis on the correct pronunciation of the Gurbani. There are numerous examples of Gurus rewarding their Sikhs for reciting Gurbani with correct pronunciation.

The art of correct pronunciation and understanding the meaning of Gurbani has been kept alive under the patronage of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji. Sri Satguru Ji is a great advocate of keeping the Sikh tradition alive and for this He has provided many resources to fulfill His vision. He has given utmost attention to Gurmat Sangeet, Gurbani recitation and Sikh maryada to name a few. He has provided services of great scholars. At the moment this role has fallen to Master Darshan Singh Ji, who with the blessing of Sri Satguru Ji and his own hard work has become a standard bearer of the Holy Scriptures. His guidance and expertise is sought by all Pathis and Raagis and he is a constant inspiration to people who want to expand their knowledge of Gurbani.

The recording task is in line to keep this tradition alive. With the blessings and vision of Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji, we had the privilege that Master Darshan Singh Ji provided his services for this mammoth project. When you carefully listen to his recitation, you will also understand the Gurbani. He has the ability to recite the Gurbani with correct pronunciation, correct gap within the sentences and emphasis on the correct sound.

Namdhari Maryada.

As per the direct orders of Sri Satguru Ji, Namdhari Sikhs are very particular about the cleanliness and holiness of reciting gurbani. The following basic rules which must be observed by every Namdhari Sikh while doing even the Daily Nitnem Path.

The person must have a complete bath – from head to toe.

- He/She must be wearing clean clothes.
- He/She must be very attentive and try to recite Gurbani in a

correct manner paying particular attention to the laga and mataras and ensuring gaps in correct places.

- His/Her pronunciation must be correct as a simple mistake in reciting a sabad can take an entirely wrong meaning.

The Namdhari Maryada for doing Sadharan Path and Akhand Path has been described in the accompanying Intro CD. Please follow the guidelines correctly.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to give our heartfelt thanks to Sri Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji. Without his vision, direction and personal blessings, this project would not have been possible. He is our prime source of inspiration.

I would also like to thank my (late) father Sant Harbans Singh Ji, who provided us with the right kind of education and training to take interest in this project. He was a great Gursikh, who built a special room for his prayers. This special facility was used in the recording of these scriptures. I would also like to thank my younger brother Surjit Singh Ji, who kindly provided relevant facilities for this task. I would also like to acknowledge the wonderful support by my wife Manjit Kaur who looked after us during long and laborious hours of recording. I am gratefully acknowledging the cooperation of Sant Taranjit Singh Ji, who despite being very busy took control of the production aspects of this project with his usual brilliance. I would also thank all those who have helped make this project a success.

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We have endeavored to present this task with great respect and reverence. It has taken a hugh effort to complete this project. Sri Aad Guru Granth final version is 55 hours 25 minutes and Sri Dasam

Guru Granth final version is 55 hours 15 minutes. It has taken an equivalent of over 1600 hours of work (recording editing, dubbing and mastering) and took nearly 2 years to complete this project. These recordings are protected by global copyright laws. Please DO NOT make any copies of this media, as this will be comparable to stealing, and stealing is against Gurmat. Always acquire the original copies from authorised sources.

Please keep this media in a safe and respectful place. While listening to this Path, please try to keep the tradition of Sikh maryada in your mind. This is common sense and you should observe the relevant code of practice.

Feedback

Although all efforts have been taken while recording, humans are full of errors. There are countless mistakes in this project. Please let us know ASAP, so that the next version can be corrected. Your feedback is very important to us, and we look forward to your comments, feedback and suggestions.

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